

Appl. No. 09/902,440
Amdt after Allowance dated 11/29/04

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-21 are canceled.

Claim 22 (currently amended): A combined locking apparatus and gooseneck trailer hitch, said combination comprising:

the gooseneck trailer hitch comprising:

a tubular member;

a handle slidably mounted to said tubular member, said handle having a latch pin;

a receiving plate fixed to said tubular member, said receiving plate defining a cavity for receiving a hitch ball and having a flange defining a first aperture for receiving said latch pin;

a lock plate pivotally connected to said receiving plate, said lock plate defining a second aperture for receiving said hitch ball; and

a retainer bracket fixed to said lock plate, said retainer bracket defining a slot in which said flange of said stationary receiving plate is slidably disposed, said retainer bracket further defining a third aperture for receiving said latch pin;

wherein said latch pin is inserted into said third aperture of said retainer bracket and said first aperture of said stationary receiving plate to immobilize said lock plate in a closed position in which said second aperture of said lock plate is misaligned with said cavity, thereby preventing insertion or removal of said hitch ball from said cavity;

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a bar disposed in said slot of said retainer bracket adjacent said flange of said stationary
receiving plate; and

a lock body locking said bar in said slot of said retainer bracket;

thereby substantially immobilizing said lock plate within said slot.

Claim 23 (previously presented). The combination of claim 22 wherein said bar traps said handle upon insertion of said bar into said slot of said retainer bracket.

Claim 24 (previously presented). The combination of claim 22 wherein said lock body is key operated and fixable on a first end of said bar.

Claim 25 (previously presented). The combination of claim 22 wherein said lock body is combination code operated and fixable on a first end of said bar.

Claim 26 (previously presented). The combination of claim 23 wherein said lock body is key operated and fixable on first and second ends of said bar, wherein said bar is "U" shaped and traps said handle prior to fixing said lock body on said bar.

Claim 27 (previously presented). The combination of claim 23 wherein said lock body is combination code operated and fixable on first and second ends of said bar, wherein said bar is "U" shaped and traps said handle prior to fixing said lock body on said bar.

REMARKS

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for allowing claims 22-27. The Applicant has amended claim 22 to be in proper form. In particular, the Applicant has replaced reference to "stationary plate" with "receiving plate" because "stationary plate" had no antecedent basis in the claim, and referred structurally to the "receiving plate" recited earlier in the claim. No new matter has been added.